173 Of migration of the Bushmen from elsewhere no mention is made in local native traditions. The Hottentots, Hereros and Ovambos state that on their arrival the Bushmen were found in occupation and that the latter must have been living here ever since the creation of man. The Bushmen likewise believe that their present tribal divisions and distribution have been in existence since the very beginning of things when each tribe had its origin in a "first big Bushman" and a "first big Bushwoman" of its own by whom were handed down to their descendants the practices and customs still peculiar to and the territory still occupied by their respective tribes. Each of the existing tribes with its constituent elements is consequently looked upon as having been "born" in and having been in occupation of the same area from time immemorial. Although claiming descent from the aboriginal race they have lost all knowledge of the arts of painting and engraving. The rock paintings and carvings left by their ancestors are considered to be the works not of man but of the "devil."

[773] [829]

[174] [531]

174 The view that the present day Bushmen are composed of the remnants of their race driven back by the advance of stronger invading races from the north and south is not borne out by evidence arising out of recent investigations into the life and customs of this primitive people.

Distribution.

101 131 With the exception of a few isolated remnants on the north bank of the Orange River and along the edge of the Namib desert, the Bushmen are confined entirely to the Kalahari along the eastern and north-eastern borders and to the northern portions of the territory which adjoin Ovamboland.

The Bushmen of the Kalahari region consist of three main divisions, each speaking a language of its own, viz.: the */Nu-//ĕin* or */Nu-san* in the south, the *Ngami* Bushmen in the centre and the *Kaukau* Bushmen in the north.

The *//Nu-//ĕin* inhabit those portions of the Gobabis, Gibeon and Aroab districts which lie to the east of the Elephant and Auob rivers. The northern limit of their distribution is formed by a line running roughly from Naunas across Oas to the Elephant's River, crossing the Nosob a short distance below the junction of the Black and White Nosob Rivers.

The *Ngami* Bushmen are composed of a good many tribes who inhabit a considerable portion of the Bechuanaland Protectorate. In South West Africa they are represented by only a few groups of the *//Aikwe* tribe. These groups are known as the *Naron* and are distributed along the banks of the Chapman River as far as Oas.

The *Kaukau* Bushmen inhabit the greater portion of the Omaheke, including a part of the Kaukauveld and the

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A lack of permanent water is probably the most trying of the difficulties which beset the Bushmen of the present day in the country which shelters them. However, it is this very disadvantage which has ensured their survival, for while they have been dispossessed of their country and exterminated in the less arid parts, in the "Great Thirst Land of the Kalahari" they have been comparatively safe from their European and Bantu enemies. The austerity and hardships of the Kalahari are offset to some extent by its deep level mantle of sand, which prevents run-off of the rainwater and makes it readily available for plant growth. "Clay, for example, is as dry as dust to the plant when it contains 18% of water, while most sands are very nearly saturated with 18% of water" (Schantz 1911). This means not only that the sandy soil can support more luxuriant plants in greater variety, but also that storage organs are common among them, for drainage in sand is so rapid and thorough that shallow-rooted plants at least are in a stronger position if they are able to collect and store the water before it sinks into the deeper layers.

Although some of the storage organs are poisonous, the Bushmen still have numerous edible bulbs, tubers and roots at their disposal. Thanks again to the sand, they can harvest these quickly and easily with wooden digging-sticks which would be inadequate in a heavy or stony soil. Other storage organs which they do not eat because of bitterness or high tannin or fibre content are nevertheless important indirectly through being eaten by the various antelopes that are the Bushmen's meat supply.

Hunting is easier as well, for as there could be few better tracking surfaces than the Kalahari sand and, as a wounded animal can thus be followed with very little risk of loss, hard-hitting weapons and careful aim are not necessary. Instead, the Bushmen use small poisoned arrows which have the advantage of being effective on any part of the body and of bringing death as certainly to big game as to small.

LINGUISTIC AND BAND GROUPINGS • The major groupings among the Bushmen cannot correctly be called tribes; they are, rather, linguistic groupings and the names by which they have been traditionally known by Europeans refer to language: for example, !Kung-speaking Bushmen, Naron-speaking Bushmen. The Bushmen themselves and their Bantu neighbors use a multitude of names by which they refer to various combinations of local groupings. Our own tentative and incomplete comparisons lead us to say that the language groups differ from one another markedly in some customs while they are much the same in others.

The language groups have no political unity among or within themselves. The only social unit larger than the family is the autonomous band composed of several families and headed by a headman (see "Political Organization," p. 267). Each of the major groupings has many bands within it.

The Bushmen whose social structure I describe in this chapter are a group of !Kung-speakers who call themselves *ju /ǒassi* and who live in the Nyae Nyae region of South West Africa. It is a region of about 10,000

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square miles, centered approximately at Gautscha (about 19°48'30" S, 20°34'36" E). The region lies for the most part in South West Africa, but extends into the Bechuanaland Protectorate to a number of Tswana and Herero settlements along the border. We arbitrarily call this particular stretch of country a region because it is a region in the minds of the Bushmen. In it are some 27 bands living independently in their own traditional way and 9 groups employed by the Tswana and Herero—a !Kung population of about 1000. These !Kung intermarry. They have not formally structured the region as an endogamous unit, but they remain within it by custom and preference. They know there are other !Kung-speakers living to the north and northwest of them, but consider them strangers, as they do the Auen-speaking and Naron-speaking Bushmen to the south.

ECONOMY

It is vividly apparent that among the !Kung Bushmen, ethos, or "the spirit which actuates manners and customs," is survival. Their time and energies are almost wholly given to this task, for life in their environment requires that they spend their days mainly in procuring food. The band organization is important to their survival, and, to secure the mutual support and companionship that it affords, they seek to regulate their social actions to reduce tension and potential hostility among the individuals within the band. They also strive to avoid the possibility of conflict between bands. Similarly, in their religious concepts and practices, the emphasis is on survival in this life on earth, not a looking forward to the eternal life in the sky after death.

WILD PLANT FOODS (*veldkos*) • The !Kung of the Nyae Nyae region have no agriculture. They subsist mainly on wild plant foods, which we refer to by the convenient Afrikaans word *veldkos*. The game the hunters of a band manage to kill is an important part of their diet and much desired, but it is by no means the daily sustenance. In this region the !Kung know more than a hundred different kinds of veldkos (cf. Story 1958). Several species of berries exist, dry and hard for the most part. A few fruits ripen suddenly in a short season. Leaves, resembling spinach, make a spring salad for a short time. Morsels of gums from certain trees are cherished like sweets. Tsama melons and wild cucumbers grow here but do not abound in this region as they do in some other parts of the Kalahari where some Bushman groups can live on them for certain seasons without having access to any water. Most important to the daily sustenance of the Nyae Nyae !Kung are the edible underground roots, tubers, and storage organs of certain drought-resistant plants. We observed the gathering of 23 different kinds of these; doubtless there are more. In addition to the roots and tubers, there are sev-

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the members" (Murdock 1949:62 ff.). This definition very nearly fits the !Kung name relationship, but we are convinced that the !Kung do not think of the region as having a consciously structured grouping to which authority is attributed, such as, for example, a rule of endogamy.

(8) Among consanguineous kin, ego is forbidden to marry siblings of parents, cousins (first, strictly; second, less strictly; and third, only theoretically), and nephews and nieces. Ego's marriage with great-grandparents, grandparents, grandchildren and great-grandchildren is also forbidden, but is not a concern. Discrepancy in age and the realization of close consanguinity combine to make the idea ridiculous and almost unthinkable. The affines whom ego must not marry are numerous, including spouses of offspring and parents of the spouse, also spouses of uncles and aunts.

Ego must not marry his sister's husband's father or brother's wife's mother, because, as marriages with the sister's husband and brother's wife are preferred, it seems improper to marry parents of one of these affines. Similarly, marriage with the husband's brother and wife's sister are preferred, so it seems logical to the !Kung to forbid marriage with the husband's brother's son or the wife's sister's daughter. Marriage with the parent of a son's wife or a daughter's husband is forbidden, for if ego married these affines that would make the son and son's wife or the daughter and daughter's husband step-brother and stepsister, which would be most awkward. Marriage with the wife's brother's wife or the husband's sister's husband is also forbidden; the reason for this lies in a complexity of the joking relationship.

Lastly, marriage is prohibited with certain name relatives whose names associate them with kinsmen to whom the incest taboo is extended. Ego is supposed not to marry anyone with the same name as his parent or offspring or anyone with the same name as his spouse's parent or offspring's spouse. He should not marry the parent or offspring or sibling of anyone with the same name as himself.

(9) When the people go to the mangetti forests after the rains have begun, the young girls draw on the soft, smooth, gray bark of female mangetti trees. They make diagrammatic representations of their genital aprons, of the bead ornaments that they wear in their hair and that are male and female symbols (the long rectangular ones are male, the triangular ones are female), and of the stripes of their leg scarifications. This suggests that the scarifications were associated directly with fertility, although now the women claim they are made only for beauty.

Incidentally, the Nyae Nyae !Kung know nothing of the cave paintings or rock engravings that abound in other parts of southern Africa. We found none in the country around them. There were drawings, however, on baobab trees, abstract-looking forms different from the girls' drawings on the mangetti trees.

(10) We believe that one of several possible adjustments might be made. Strictly speaking, a daughter does not become headman (though we heard people